



July 1987

ABE's ACE's AND EXPO APPEAR IN ATARI EXPLORER MAGAZINE

A look at the Eastern Pennsylvania Atari Expo—now we know how it should be done

User Friendly

By BETSY STAPLES

I have been attending computer shows for close to a decade now, and I can honestly say that I have never seen a more organized or more carefully planned Atari Eastern Pennsylvania Atari Expo that took place in Allentown, PA, this spring.

If your user group has not yet held an Expo, listen up, and I'll tell you what ABE's ACE's did right—from an exhibitor's point of view.

Without a doubt, the most unusual aspect of the show was the venue. The Eastern Pennsylvania Atari Expo was held in a very pleasant, pint-sized Hilton Hotel in the heart of downtown Allentown, only a mile or so from a major highway. Surrounded by inexpensive parking facilities in easy walk from reasonably priced restaurants.

What's so unusual about that? Noth-

ing really, except that I had never before attended a show held in a hotel, and I liked the idea of being able to pop up to my room at any time to show up around the corner to get a decent meal.

I have exhibited at shows in convention centers, gymnasiums, cafeterias, and parking garages, but never have I been so *comfortable*. Usually, the show floor is packed, and most are completely isolated, leaving attendees and exhibitors at the mercy of the "convention services" operator for all amenities.

Have you ever had the misfortune to try one of their \$4.50 hot dogs? Or how about the beer—medium beer—that is served with a pitcher liner not full?

All that is by the way. I'm saying that if you can find a nice hotel with a suitable room for your show, your exhibitors will love you, and some of the showgoers might be appreciative as well.

Meet Your Booth...

Another thing the Pennsylvania group did right was to include in the price of a booth everything most exhibitors need—no extra charges for furniture, draping, signs, or electricity. This is a much better approach than presenting potential exhibitors with a laundry list of irritating extras.

And everything was in place when we arrived. I don't know what the situation was on Friday night when setup officially began, but when we arrived on Saturday morning, our two ACE's group members were stationed around the area to provide help where needed, and

all we had to do was open a few cartons and set out our wares. What a pleasure!

Shortly after we arrived, a large bouquet of helium-filled Atari balloons was delivered and tied to our booth, lending a festive air to the exhibit area.

The various vendor tables were set up in the room, and Ralph Fenner, who was in charge of exhibit sales, periodically read the winning numbers over the public address system. His announcements were appropriate in number and content, if a tad loud.

How Public Is Your Public Address?

Which brings me to my next bit of advice: try to keep announcements to a minimum—in both number and volume. Don't turn the microphone over to the club chair for the opening and assume that all the time in the room will enjoy his clever quips and crazy Eddie imitation; more than likely, exhibitors and attendees alike will be longing to offer the fellow a microphone sandwich by the time Saturday lunch rolls around.

Take a lesson from Ralph: keep announcements short and concise and make them only when necessary. And do check the volume; most convention hall PA systems are capable of delivering more than 60 db than the average Atari user's ears and brain need for accurate information processing. Remember, a whisper is a far better attention-getter than a shout.

Booking Publicity

Some combination of ABE's ACE's and Atari's public relations agency managed to come up with an impressive media coverage for the Expo. There was at least one TV crew on hand Saturday afternoon, and the Sunday edition of the

local paper featured a story and photograph on the front page.

That's the way to do it, of course—arrange for the media coverage to run while the show is in progress. A story on page 6 of Monday's paper will make a lasting impression, but it will not cost you a cent.

So try to arrange for interested press people to visit the show

early—maybe even Friday evening if you plan to begin setup then.

Regarding advance publicity, Sandy Austin says that posters have proved to be the most cost-effective form of advertisement. She recommends that club leaders make sure that they can actually zero dollar. So try to arrange for interested press people to visit the show

paper and crayon) posters.

And don't overlook the potential of your own BBS and newsletter. The first people we talked to at the Allentown Expo were from Richmond, VA, and they said that one reason for the success of the show was that the members who signed up at the show were from states other than Pennsylvania. How did they find out about an event so far from home? Probably—directly or indirectly—through a newsletter exchange.

So here you have a few hints and personal observations that I hope will make your Atari Expo more enjoyable and more profitable for all concerned. If those of you who have already held shows have additional tips, please write and let us know, we'll try to publish them here to help others.

Atari Fair Schedule

Williamsport, PA
SCAT, LCACCE and CLAUG
July 25-26, 1987
Ramada Hotel O'Hare

Delaware, DE
MAGIC, Genesee Atari Group, ST User Group
August 29-30, 1987
Southfield Civic Center

Montana, MT
ACENET
September 19-20, 1987
Glendale Civic Auditorium

Worcester, MA
Boston Computer Society Atari SIG
September 26-27, 1987 (tentative)
Worcester Centru

Washington, DC
NOVATARI
October 17, 1987

Palm Beach, FL
Atari Club of the Palm Beaches
November 21-22, 1987

New Jersey, NJ
December 5-6, 1987

For further information, contact Sandy Austin, Atari Corp., 1196 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086, (408) 745-2012.

You've Come A Long Way, Marti

You've come a long way, Atari, from the days when the only female folks at your user meetings were little girls whose regular babysitters were unavailable.

Now, Atari, you can look with pride at a group like ABE's ACE's that has not only a substantial female constituency but a woman president.

Far from the stereotypical scene used that was once thought to be the backbone of computer clubs, Shirley Fenner, ACE's ACE, is the president of a SIG of three who has been involved with computers for over about two years.

She first became interested in learning to use the family Atari when her three-year-old daughter wanted to use it. She asked her husband for guidance but found that taking computer lessons from one's spouse is actually less dangerous than taking driving lessons from one's spouse.

Not wanting to jeopardize her marriage, Shirley turned to ABE's ACE's. When she first started to attend meet-

ings, she was one of only three women in the group, and she soon discovered that they were all there for the same reason; they were looking for a dismantleable third place to which they could go to draw attendees with large, professional-looking (try to avoid notebook

paper and crayon) posters.

And don't overlook the potential of

your own BBS and newsletter. The first

people we talked to at the Allentown

Expo were from Richmond, VA, and

they said that one reason for the

success of the show was that the mem-

bers who signed up at the show were

from states other than Pennsylvania.

How did they find out about an event

so far from home? Probably—directly or

indirectly—through a newsletter ex-

change.

So here you have a few hints and

personal observations that I hope will

make your Atari Expo more enjoyable

and more profitable for all concerned.

If those of you who have already held

shows have additional tips, please write

and let us know, we'll try to publish

them here to help others.

User Group Directory—Are You Listed?

You asked for it, but you're not going to get it unless you give us some help.

Today, only about 50 of the 500 or so user groups that Atari believes are in existence have responded to our call for information to be published in a User Group Directory.

We could just publish Atari's list of names and addresses, but we think it would be desirable to include additional information about each club. So we're going to give you some more help.

With those of you who have not already done so, please designate one person in your user group to send us the following information about your group:

1. Full name and acronym.
2. Address.
3. Name of president.
4. Name of membership chairperson.
5. Frequency of meetings.

6. Location of meetings.

7. A phone number for prospective members to call for verification of meeting time/date and other information.

8. Does the group have a newsletter?

9. Does the group publish a newsletter? If so, give name and frequency.

10. Does the group maintain a BBS?

If no, provide details.

11. Approximate number of members.

12. Anything else you think we should know.

Compile this information in legible form (please don't just send your newsletter) and mail it as soon as possible to:

User Friendly
Atari Explorer
7 Hilltop Rd.
Meadowbrook, NJ 07945

This is your last chance to win fame, fortune, and new members.

46 ATARI EXPLORER SUMMER 1987

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 3 ATARI EXPLORER 47

EDITORIAL

The new year for ABE's ACEs has only just begun, and already it looks like it's going to be a banner year for the club. We have all sorts of new things going on, primarily as a result of a motivated executive board. Most of the e-board members this year are full of new ideas to make their part of the club work better.

But, I must give credit where it is most due. One of the main reasons we have such a "motivated" e-board is because of our new president. He is asking, and receiving, more out the other members of the board than you would normally expect. He quite rightly employs the philosophy that, if you don't want to do the e-board job right, make room for someone who does. Now, Dennis is taking a little bit of a risk in using this approach because, quite frankly, there were NOT a whole lot of people fighting to get on this year's election ballot. It would prove hard to replace an e-board member this year due to a minor plague of apathy within the club. **HOWEVER**, we do have a good group of people on the board -- they all seem willing to put out that little bit extra to change a declining club into a great club once again.

With these thoughts in mind, you can see how this "motivation" is going to manifest itself within the club. We will be having meetings that will be worthwhile to attend this year! Meetings are being planned MONTHS (not days) in advance. Meeting topics are being chosen carefully to involve both 8 and 16 bit users. Guest speakers are being sought actively. No good idea is being left untried. We have an example of this in the contest. Here we have some **REAL** prizes (that is, prizes

worth striving for) and the contest is a breeze to enter. Look elsewhere in this issue for details on rules and prizes.

This newsletter is another example of the board's willingness to try new ideas. We have the first really **NEW** editor (me) in years trying to crank out six (or more) good issues. We are also taking a shot at new technology by using **DESKTOP PUBLISHING** for production, rather than the old scissors and glue method. I, personally, think it's about time we used this wonderful contraption called the **ATARI** to increase our publishing productivity. By computerizing the newsletter, we should be able to improve its contents by allowing more time to be devoted to writing instead of cutting. We've had a bit of a rocky start, but I believe this is the best approach.

I've taken the liberty of instituting a few of my own ideas in this newsletter. Each issue will have an editorial (of course), a president's column, and another e-board member's column. This new column will be called "On Board," and will allow a different member of the board to express his opinions on whatever topic he wishes.

This will allow the general membership to better understand the people who are running the show. Also, as stated at the July meeting, I am looking for letters to the editor. Anything on your mind lately? What about that stupid thing **ATARI** Corp. did this time? What about that great new product you saw? How about them **METS**? Just send it on in to the club address labeled: **ATTN: Editor**, and I'll certainly get it. I'm trying to stimulate some active dialog in these pages. We're also still running classified ads free to any club member.

That's all for now. Keep those articles coming, and don't forget to start attending those general meetings again, it could prove quite profitable!

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The July 11th meeting went just about as we, the new E-Board, had hoped. A good club/Atari news section, questions and answers, a semi-pro presentation on home control with the Atari, home control information sheets and a great door prize, the X-10 POWERHOUSE computer interface. In addition, several new library disks for both 8 and 16-bit systems were on sale for \$3 each. We even had air conditioning to beat the 90+ summer heat.

It was announced that we will hold our second annual ATARI SAFARI at the August 8th meeting. (This one will be air conditioned also.) As was the case last year, the SAFARI will be held in the college cafeteria (doors open at 1PM and the SAFARI will run until 3:30). This year, you will have a chance to see, and even work with, a wide range of programs on both 8 and 16-bit Atari systems. Don't miss this year's ATARI SAFARI.

Another announcement was made at the July 11th meeting. Details of what members of the club have to do in order to have a chance to win the new super contest we announced in the "spaceman" flyer. Here's all you have to do. 1) Attend any three meetings between September and December 1987. 2) Write something for the club's newsletter on any Atari or club-related subject. The story must be an original and must be between 500 and 1000 words long. Get yours to our editor, Chris Scullion by the December meeting AT THE LATEST. See the last page of this newsletter for information on how to

get your story to Chris.

That's all you have to do. Show up three times and write something for your newsletter. If you do those two things, your name will be put in the hat and you'll have a shot at the super prizes when the winners are picked at random during our January 1988 meeting. Unlike the billion-to-one shot you normally have at winning a free McSoda during a burger contest, I figure your chances here are more like one in fifty of walking home with an ST system or 20 meg hard drive or one of the other prizes.

In other news, the club HOTLINE has a new number, (215) 759-3336 and will always have the latest information about the general meetings, SIGS, guest speakers and so on. This is a voice (answering machine) line so you don't need a modem or any special equipment to call it. Well, you do need a phone.

The club's HELP KEY BBS is now running the latest version of Michtron's software and has a 20 meg hard drive to hold the hundreds of public domain programs for both the 8-bit and ST computers. In addition, we've added a call forwarding station for our members to the north and west of Allentown so that they will no longer have to call long distance to utilize the BBS. A completely revised instruction booklet and quick reference card have been printed for the BBS. Just ask for your copy at any meeting.

A lot's going to be happening this year at ABE's ACEs. We hope you'll be part of it. After all, the more the merrier.

ON BOARD

with John Slaby

I joined this club over 4 years ago so I could talk with other people that also enjoyed playing/using the ATARI computer. At that time it was the excellent slide shows that Dennis John did that convinced me this was a group worth belonging to. As I grew to know more of the members I also realized that the interaction available at the meeting was also valuable and made belonging worthwhile. It also lead to more personalized interaction after the meetings.

We lost some, but by no means all, of this interaction two years ago with the move to the college. Since something was lost last year we attempted to recapture it with Sig-Night. This was mainly to benefit the eight bit users as the ST Sig was doing well. Of the three I managed to attend one was fantastic the other two were flops. We have one more scheduled before it probably fades away forever. For this loss I blame the general membership. This was your chance to show off or bring in software/hardware that you were having trouble with and hopefully get an answer on the spot. Having done a lot of troubleshooting I know this is the best way. The verbal descriptions, like those in the monthly general meeting, tend to always leave something critical out. Also it seemed at the two flops that almost all the handful of people that showed came to be entertained only and not to participate. This is strange since a computer requires interaction to do anything.

Games don't play themselves and word processors don't write letters by themselves. User groups should be the

same way. That's why I find it disappointing that these people didn't bring anything to demo or something they were having problems using or even have questions so they could learn something new. I considered these to be the main purposes behind Sig-Night. To put it in one word its SHARE. No one is an expert at everything and everyone is an expert at something. It doesn't have to be programing. Becoming proficient at using a program makes you an expert and tricks you learned can benefit the group as a whole.

It isn't that hard to share at Sig-Night. It's certainly easier at the general meeting where you're up in front of everyone, but even there it isn't that bad. You as the audience are very generous. Even to boring speakers like me.

If the Sig-Night this month is the last, then it will go out with a whimper, not a bang, and you only have yourselves to blame.



CALCORP

Computer Service Bureau

Accounting Systems
Bookkeeping - Payrolls
Word Processing
Statistical Analysis

(201) 475-8534
(215) 258-5686

**the
Electronic
Repair
Center**



823 UNION BLVD
ALLENTOWN, PA
18103

(215) 432-6332



commodore

**FACTORY AUTHORIZED
SERVICE**

WE SERVICE MOST MANUFACTURERS

**• PERSONAL COMPUTERS • DISK DRIVES •
• PRINTERS • MONITORS •**

**Here is a list of the next few meeting
dates. Be sure to mark your calendars!**

**August 8, 1987 (Cafeteria)
September 12, 1987 (Theater)
October 10, 1987 (Theater)
November 14, 1987 (Theater)
December 12, 1987 (Cafeteria)**

**At the August 8th meeting we will be
holding another ATARI SAFARI. There
will be lots of computers on display,
showing all the latest in ATARI software
and hardware. You will be able to take a
peek at the club's BBS in operation and
see the club newsletter being produced
using Publishing Partner. There'll be lots
more to see and do. See you then!**

!!! CONTEST !!!

**ABE's ACES is having a CONTEST! Not just any contest, no sir.
This one's got real prizes! NOT a free year's membership.
NOT a free library disk. NOT a veg-o-matic. Just take a look at
these:**

**FIRST PRIZE An ATARI 520 ST monochrome system
 OR
 A 20 Mbyte hard disk drive**

SECOND PRIZE An AVATEX 1200 baud modem

THIRD PRIZE A \$50 gift certificate to GEMINI

**All you have to do to enter is attend three general club meetings
between September and December (inclusive) and submit an
original article to the newsletter (500 to 1000 words). It's that
simple!**



MICRO COTTAGE

2802 MACARTHUR ROAD WHITEHALL, PENNSYLVANIA 18052
(215) 439-0117

! NOW WE SUPPORT ATARI HARDWARE !

ICD, OSS, XETEC, SUPRA, AVATEX
and of course our usual
10 TO 50% OFF ALL SOFTWARE

Open Mon., Tues. & Thurs. 10 till 7
Fri. & Sat. 10 till 8

J & S COMPUTERS
(215) 966-4464

ATARI
1040/ST COLOR----- \$859
1040/ST MONO----- 715
130XE COMPUTER----- 149
1050 DISK DRIVE----- 135
1027 PRINTER----- 125
PRINTERS
INTERFACE----- 35
EPSON LX86----- 269
EPSON FX86e----- 429
EPSON FX286e----- 619
EPSON LQ800----- 549
EPSON LQ1000----- 799
EPSON EX800----- 529
EPSON EX1000----- 759
MISC.
DATALIFE 5 1/4" DISKS----- 10
DATALIFE 3 1/2" DISKS----- 18
MOREX SS/DD FLIP'N FILE W/20 20
MOREX DS/DD FLIP'N FILE W/20 22
MODEMS
ATARI XM 301----- 39
AVATEX 1200hc----- 135

Treasurer's Report April - July 17

Income Items

CURNT NOTE	119.00
DISK SALES	677.00
EXPO	2671.85
MEMBERSHIP	510.00
MICS.	25.00
NEWS. ADS	105.00
RAFFLE	85.00
VENDER FEE	16.00
Total:	4208.85

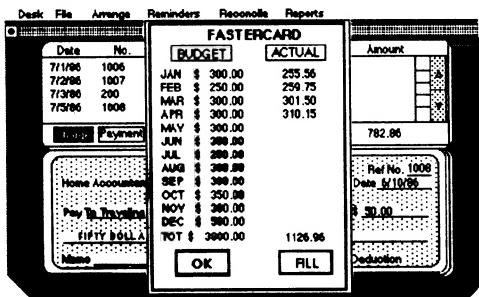
Expense Items

CLUB BBS'S	129.75
CURNT NOTE	119.00
EQUIPMENT	40.80
HOT LINE	85.73
LIBRARY	222.50
MEET/EXPEN	12.00
MEET/HALL	225.00
MEMBERSHIP	554.46
MICS. EXP.	26.50
NEWS POST.	216.80
NEWSLETTER	454.28
PRESIDENT	20.46
PROMOTION	99.90
Total:	2207.18

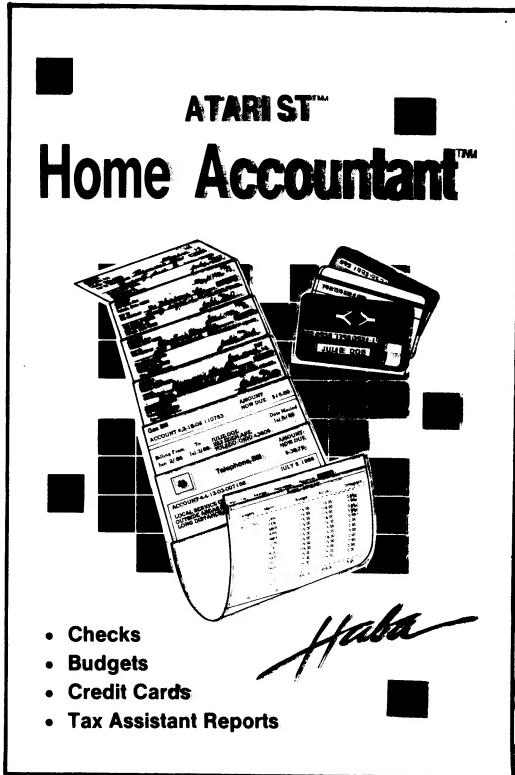
Home AccountantTM

for the ATARI STTM

The easy-to-use
accounting program that
helps you manage your
money!



- Automatically sets up and arranges checking or credit accounts.
- Set monthly budgets for each category.
- Prints personal or business checks.
- Unique Bill Reminder feature lets you review and pay your bills quickly.
- Display and print helpful financial data, including tax-deductible expenses, payment-due reminders, cash flow reports and monthly budget comparison reports.



- Reconcile your checking account simply by "checking off" items that have cleared the bank and entering the ending balance from your bank statement! Later you can sort your register by cleared or uncleared items to quickly see the status of your account.

\$74⁹⁵

Haba Systems, Inc. 6711 Valjean Avenue, Van Nuys, California 91406 • (818) 994-1899

ABE's ACEs

Allentown Bethlehem Easton's Atari Computer Enthusiasts is an independent user group organized and run by owners of Atari Computers. Atari is a trademark of Atari Corp.; all references should be so noted.

If you would like more information about ABE's ACEs, write us at the club's address or call the club Hotline at the number listed below.

Newsletter

This newsletter is published by ABE's ACEs on a bi-monthly basis (six issues per year). Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and not ABE's ACEs. All unsigned articles should be attributed to the Editor. This newsletter is provided free to our membership and on an exchange basis to other user groups. Original articles from our newsletter may be reprinted in other newsletters provided credit is given to both author and source.

Submissions to the newsletter may be made via the Help Key II, at the general meetings, or by mail to the club's P.O. Box. For more information, leave messages on the Help Key II or call the club Hotline.

Special Projects

Ralph A. Fenner ----- (215) 868-6459

**Allentown Bethlehem Easton's
Atari Computer Enthusiasts**
P.O. Box 2830
Lehigh Valley, PA 18001

Executive Committee

President	-----	Dennis John (215) 759-8151
Vice-President	-----	Leon Bonam (215) 266-1512
Secretary	-----	Curtis Lopez (201) 475-4854
Treasurer	-----	John Slaby (215) 252-1991
Membership	-----	Ralph A. Fenner (215) 868-6459
Librarian	-----	Chris C. Andrews (215) 868-2459
Newsletter Editor	-----	Chris Scullion Unlisted

Library Staff

8-Bit Disks	-----	John Douglas
16-Bit Disks	-----	
Paper Library	-----	Open

Meeting Set-Up

Open

Club Phone Numbers

Help Key II	-----	→ (215) 759-2683
Club Hotline (Voice)	-----	→ (215) 759-3336

